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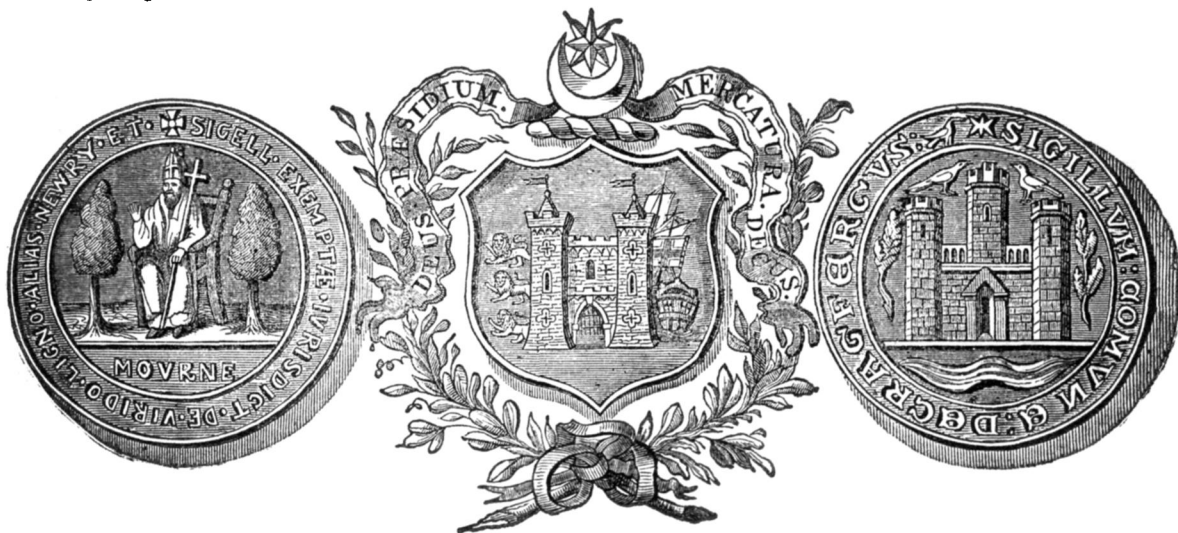
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that of the Lordship of Newry and Mourne, which jurisdiction presents the phenomenon in Irish history of a charter, conferred by an Irish monarch, still in force and still acted upon in its full primeval power and authority. For a translation of this Charter, and important information respecting it, see the 13th number of the Journal.

The seal of the Lordship of Newry and Mourne represents a mitred abbot in his albe, seated in a chair, and supported by two yew trees—the motto, “*Sigillum exemptæ Jurisdictionis de virido ligno, alias, Newry et Mourne.*”

Newry was anciently called by the several names of *Monasterium Nevoracense*; *Jubhar-chin-Traigh*; in the



barbarous Latin of the age, *Monasterium de viridi Ligno*; and in Irish, *Na Juar*, or *Na Yur*, signifying the yew trees. It will be remembered that in the 13th number of this Journal, in the article entitled “The Charter of Newry,” it is stated that a tradition exists to the effect that “two large yew trees formerly grew within the precincts of the abbey, from which the place was called, in old English documents, the Newries,” the accuracy of which tradition is singularly confirmed by the extract from the annals of the Four Masters, also quoted there, which records that, in the year 1162, “The monastery of the monks of Newry was burned with all its furniture and books, and also the yew trees, which Saint Patrick himself had planted.”

The next I shall advert to, are the Arms of Drogheda, one of our oldest corporations, enjoying that distinction since the reign of King John, and held in such repute by the heads of the English power in this country, that the various chief governors, until the reign of Charles II., made it their occasional residence, and there performed many of the most important acts of their government. The arms are azure, a crenelated gate of two towers argent, portcullised sable, surmounted by pennons gules; on the dexter, a ship appearing to sail behind the gate, having St. George’s ensign displayed over her stern—on the sinister, three lions of England, issuant or. Crest, on a wreath, a crescent and star, argent; motto, “*Deus Præsidium Mercatura Decus.*”

These arms are a strong evidence of the former strength and importance of this town; and point out the security afforded by its possession to the commerce of England, represented by the ship bearing her flag—and to her military power, signified by the cognizance of their king—both equally secured and guarded by the embattled gate, which also points out the possession of this fortress as the key of the north, and the Sallyport from which they might issue, to curb and restrain the province of Ulster, in which division of the kingdom the County of Louth was formerly considered.

The Crest—the half moon and star—is not the least interesting part of the device—being the arms of the prince from whom the Corporation of Drogheda received its charter. They appear in this fashion on all the triangular coins of John struck in this country, and also in sculpture over the thrones in St. Patrick’s Cathedral, Dublin, which were erected during his lordship of Ireland.

That the commerce of Drogheda was, from the earliest period, considerable, is incontestably proved by the motto; and long may its citizens have cause to say—

“GOD is our safeguard, and merchandize our glory.”

The last I shall on the present occasion instance, is the common seal of the County of the Town of Carrickfergus, to which I am indebted to Mr. M’Sकिन’s very valuable history of this town. This represents a castle, crenelated and turretted, the base washed by the sea, with a palm branch on each side; the birds I take to be merely ornamental. This device refers entirely to the situation; for although Carrickfergus is undoubtedly a very ancient corporation, yet it was so exposed to the assaults and insults of an implacable enemy, that it never arrived at any particular importance. Mr. M’Sकिन states, that it is said to have been incorporated by King John, and says, that as “it is certain sheriffs were appointed in those counties and cities held by the English, by Henry II., who were confirmed by King John on his visit to Ireland, the 12th of his reign, some of those princes may have created it a county.” The sheriffalty was held jointly with that of the County of Antrim. The most ancient patent existing respecting them, is dated September 11th, 1326, the 20th of Edward II.; the words are—“The King to his beloved John de Athye, greeting. Know ye that we have committed to you the office of Sheriff of the Counties of Carrickfergus and Antrim, to hold during pleasure.” In the Down Survey, it is called the “County Palatine of Carrickfergus.” Counties Palatine were erected immediately after the conquest of the country by the English, and were endowed with “great privileges,” in order that the inhabitants, who were “subject to continual invasions,” might defend them against the “wild Irish.”

I have thus endeavoured to sketch the outline of a plan for the elucidation of a most interesting portion of our national antiquities. Trusting that it will be followed up, I beg leave to subscribe myself, yours truly,

ARMSTRONG.

THE TOMB IN HOLY CROSS ABBEY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DUBLIN PENNY JOURNAL.

SIR—I have seen in your 42d Number a very interesting paper on the beautiful monument in Holy Cross Abbey, which hitherto has been considered as that of Donald More O’Brien, king of Limerick, but which you desire to exhibit as that of Eleanor Butler, daughter of James, the second earl of Ormond, and the wife of Gerald, the fourth earl of Desmond.

While highly approving of the preliminary remarks on the requisites and characteristics of a true antiquary, as distinguished from the stupid industry and grub-

bing propensities of those who are unable to rise above the rubbish which surrounds them, I cannot exactly agree with the writer in his conjecture, and am inclined to believe that he is better versed in antiquarian than in heraldic lore, and therefore has fallen into mistakes out of which I may possibly extricate him. Being somewhat acquainted with heraldry, and having made antiquarian researches a part of my study, I venture to assert that the monument in question is not the tomb of the Countess of Desmond, or any of her family, but that of Elizabeth, the daughter and heiress of Gerald, earl of Kildare, who was the first wife of James, the fourth earl of Ormond. This indeed removes all difficulties; all the escutcheons of arms are in perfect order and position. The royal arms of England show the descent of the Butlers from the Plantagenets; the Butler coat is on the husband's side; the Fitzgeralds on the wife's; the cross on the first escutcheon may be, and possibly was, intended to represent that of St. George.

The lady to whom I assign this monument died about the year 1400. The architecture is of that period; and, as above stated, the heraldry tells the tale exactly. Is any further proof necessary?

I will merely add, in conclusion, that the haughty and powerful earl of Desmond was not likely to acknowledge by his own act the superiority of his wife's family, by placing her arms in the most honorable position, to the degradation of his own; nor was such a practice usual even where the disparity of rank was much greater than between the Desmonds and Ormonds.

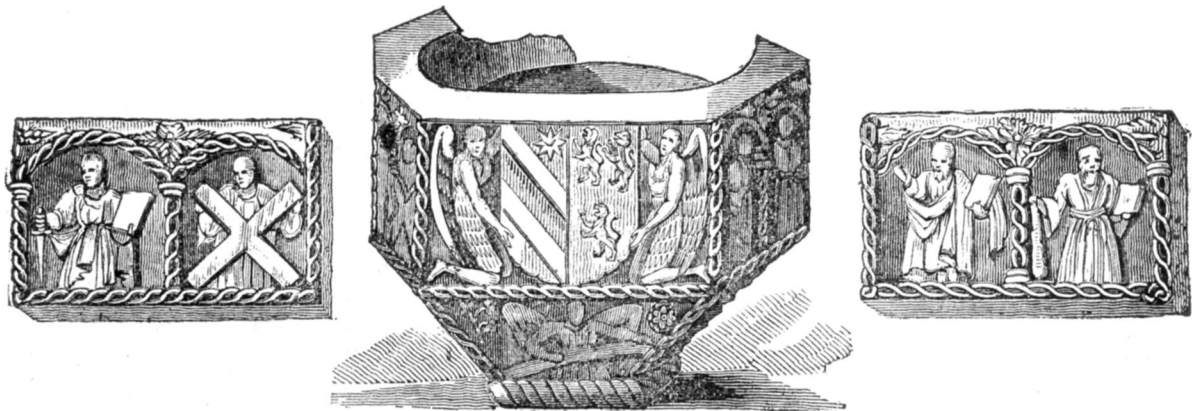
Hoping that your useful Journal may be made the vehicle of much future antiquarian information, and wishing success to your exertions, I am, &c.

Stradbrook House.

WILLIAM BETHAM.

As the elucidation of truth is at all times our paramount object, we have great pleasure in giving publicity to the above communication from our kind and worthy friend, the Ulster King—the most competent authority on such a question. For his opinion we have the most sincere respect, and are free to acknowledge, that we should not have ventured on the publication of the article commented on, without consulting him, but that he was at the time, and for some weeks previous, out of the country. But though we do not desire to uphold an opinion one moment for the sake of argument, or to maintain a claim to antiquarian infallibility, we must, notwithstanding, confess with every deference, that Sir William has not quite convinced us that we have been in error—and though it is not unlikely that we may be wrong, we are strongly inclined to believe that he is far from being right. We shall endeavour to make this apparent. In the age, which we were the first to assign to this remarkable monument, Sir William concurs; he differs with us only as to the person for whom it was erected, who, he asserts, was not the daughter of James, the Second Earl of Ormond and Countess of Desmond, but the daughter and heiress of Gerald, Earl of Kildare, who was the first wife of James, the Fourth Earl of Ormond. To come to this conclusion, it is in the first place, obviously necessary to prove that the arms on the fourth shield, are those of Kildare and not of Desmond. It is on the admission of this premise that all Sir William's conclusions rest. But though he takes this for granted, we do not; as he has advanced no evidence to support this supposition; while on the other hand it is to be observed, that in the engraving of the tomb given in the year 1772, by O'Halloran, the arms are undoubtedly those of Desmond; and that in a recent etching, by Mr. D. Gurney, they appear also to be of that family. Secondly, even though we should concede this point to Sir William, his conclusions are not borne out by facts; for it appears by unquestionable historical evidences—first, that James, the Fourth Earl of Ormond, was not married before the year 1400, the period assigned by Sir William for his wife's death, or even of age in the year 1407, in which year his wardship was granted to Thomas, Duke of Lancaster, son of Henry IV. Secondly, though it is true that his first wife was, as Sir William states, the daughter of Gerald, Earl of Kildare, her name was not Elizabeth but Joan; and though this difference of name is of little consequence, it is certain that the Countess can have no claim to the monument in question, as we have evidence that she died in London, in the year 1430, and was buried there in the hospital of St. Thomas D'Acre, to which her husband had been a great benefactor. There was also at a later period, another intermarriage between the noble houses of Ormond and Kildare, when in 1485, Pierce, the Eighth Earl of Ormond married the celebrated Lady Margaret, the daughter of Gerald, the Eighth Earl of Kildare;—but the claim of this lady must, equally with that of her predecessor, be set aside, as it is certain that she was interred with her husband in the cathedral of Kilkenny, as appears from the inscription on their magnificent tomb, still remaining. Are we not justified, therefore, in replying that further proof is necessary before we should be satisfied that we are in error, or that, at least, Sir William himself is nearer the truth?

P.



ANCIENT BAPTISMAL FONT, ST. PETER'S, DROGHEDA.

The font, of which the above is a representation, formerly occupied a conspicuous place in the Collegiate Church of Saint Peter's at Drogheda—a building which, although long destroyed, in former days yielded to none in this kingdom in extent or magnificence—its precincts contained several chapels and oratories, erected and dedicated by the piety of individuals renowned in their day. At various times, within its walls, were held Synods for the regulation of the spiritual concerns of Ireland, over which, the venerable Primates of Armagh presided—and beneath its floor, reposed the ashes of those who, in this life, ruled and swayed the destinies of thousands.

We have strong evidence to prove this church was rich in ornament and decoration; and that the various arts then in use for the enrichment of ecclesiastical edifices were put in requisition for its embellishment. In "Guilim's Display of Heraldry," page 327, (printed A.D. 1660) the following example occurs:—"He beareth argent, a chevron engrailed between three trumpets sable, by the name of Thunder; this coat armour standeth in a glass window, in St. Peter's Church, in Drogheda, in Ireland," and we have record in Harris's Collections, vol. 2d, as quoted by Archdall, that "the steeple of this church, supposed to be the highest then in the world, was thrown down

by a violent tempest, about midnight of the 27th Jan. 1548." This steeple was subsequently replaced by one of wood, which continued until 1649, when Cromwell, like a destroying angel, swept the land with the besom of destruction;—after forcing an entrance into this devoted town, he caused this "church to be fired," and in it he acknowledges "above 2000 persons were put to the sword, flying thither for safety. See the 36th number of the Journal.

The ancient church of St. Peter's never recovered this visitation; that it was partially repaired, is evident from a view of the town, engraved in 1692, in possession of the writer, in which it is represented as having a steeple; but in the year 1740, it was entirely removed and the present beautiful edifice, of Grecian architecture, erected on its site.

Among the ornaments in the original church, the subject of this notice must have been conspicuous: it presents a very beautiful specimen of ancient art; and being composed of lime-stone, the produce of the neighbouring quarries, is evidently the work of a native artist.

In form, it is an octagon—a figure usually employed by the ancient Christian Irish in the construction of baptisteries; examples of which we have at Mellifont Abbey, County of Louth, St. Doulagh's, County of Dublin, &c.—The entire outer surface is elaborately carved; the front